

REMARKS

With entry of this amendment, claims 23, 24, 28, 38, 41, 43, 44, and 63 have been cancelled, and claims 66-73 have been newly added, resulting in the pendency of claims 2-4, 9-13, 17, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 45-62, and 64-76. Based on the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. §102

Aida

Claims 4, 9, 11, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,897,495 issued to Aida et al. ("Aida"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since Aida does not disclose each and every element of these claims, as amended.

In particular, independent claim 4 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 2 and 3 in the disjunctive, which the Examiner indicated as reciting patentable subject matter. As such, Applicant believes that independent claim 4, as well as the claims depending therefrom (claims 9, 11, and 12), are not anticipated by Aida, and as such, respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Heckele

Claims 10, 27, 29, 30, 39, 48-50, and 60 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,176,855 issued to Heckele et al. ("Heckele"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since Heckele does not disclose each and every element of these claims, as amended.

In particular, independent claim 10 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 38, which the Examiner indicated as reciting patentable subject matter, and independent claim 30 has

been amended to include the limitation of claim 28, which the Examiner indicated as also reciting patentable subject matter.

As such, Applicant believes that independent claims 10 and 28, as well as the claims depending therefrom (claims 27, 29, 30, 39, 48-50, and 60), are not anticipated by Heckeles, and as such, respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

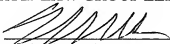
Applicant graciously acknowledges the allowance of claims 13, 32, 34, 35, 42, 45-47, 51-59, 61, 62, 64, and 65. In accordance with the Examiner's suggestions, claims 2 and 3 have been rewritten as independent claim 4, claim 17 has been rewritten as new claim 66, claim 28 has been rewritten as independent claim 30, claim 38 has been rewritten as independent claim 10, and claim 40 has been rewritten as independent claim 70.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is believed that all claims are now allowable and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at (949) 724-1849.

Respectfully submitted,

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